

## Metaphor as a Mirror of Gender-based Ideology in an Algerian Context: A Sociolinguistic Perspective

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### Abstract

Gender-based ideologies seem to be firmly embedded in the way Algerian men and women are stereotyped through the process of metaphorisation which, in turn, tends to reinforce patriarchal traditional beliefs towards gender roles and identities. Hence, this paper sheds light on the most used metaphors manifesting in the spoken Algerian Dialectal Arabic variety in Tiaret city, West of Algeria. It seeks also to reveal the sociolinguistic implications associated with those metaphorical representations of men and women in the Algerian culture, and depict the real meanings that they denote in real life situations. To do this, the study employs a corpus-based analysis of a group of metaphors taken from the daily spoken discourse of people living in the speech community of Tiaret. The findings of qualitative analyses revealed that a good deal of metaphors tend to support gender ideologies and reinforce negative stereotypical representations concerning femininity, while they demonstrate positive connotations vis-à-vis masculinity.

**Keywords:** Metaphor, Gender Ideologies, Algerian Culture, Stereotypes

### Introduction

From a purely historical standpoint, the field of gender-linked language studies is best known and remembered for being an offshoot of early androcentric research which holds the ideological belief that social power is associated with the man and weakness is a trait of being a woman. Androcentrism refers here to the patriarchal gender ideology that implicitly grants legitimacy to men supremacy and deprives women from exercising any sort of social power. In other words, it is a kind of social prejudice and injustice represented in a bunch of polarized gender roles and folk linguistic stereotypes whereby the male depicted as the 'norm' and the female as 'deviant' in most patriarchal societies. Hence, a bunch of gendered metaphors and proverbs in the Algerian culture are intimately linked to and support given gendered ideologies and the conventional social norms to which women and men ought to accommodate their socio-cultural and linguistic practices. In this vein, "they function to sustain hegemonic male dominance and female subordination" (Talbot, 2003).

Interestingly, with the proliferation of civilization and the development of modern social life in the Algerian society, the distribution of gender roles at the level of employment, workplace and leadership is no longer in favour of men only, but became rather inclusive in the sense that women have entered the public sphere and seized authoritative social positions which they could not have had any access to in the past, except in some conservative Algerian families where men are generally stereotyped as 'breadwinners' and women as 'housewives' or 'homemakers'.

In fact, gender-based ideologies correspond to those sexist attitudes, practices and stereotypes that reinforce the re-occurrence of folk-linguistic beliefs and prejudices regarding the sociolinguistic behaviour of men and women in a given socio-cultural context. In the modern Algerian society, some gendered metaphors and proverbs are still functioning as empowering linguistic devices of a patriarchal normative belief system in day-to-day interactions. Albeit the remarkable and increasing improvement in the socio-economic status

of women in Algeria, the latter is still depicted as a handicapped social category through the use of certain traditional derogatory metaphors in the Algerian Arabic colloquial language variety. Therefore, the present paper seeks to unveil the major folk beliefs and androcentric ideas of what to be 'masculine' and 'feminine' in the Algerian culture by examining the sociolinguistic and the cultural implications by examining a corpus of gendered metaphors and proverbs selected for our investigation. To meet this ultimate objective, the following two research questions are raised:

- What are the major gender-based ideologies and stereotypes associated with those most used gendered metaphors and figurative expressions in the Algerian dialectal Arabic?
- To what extent do these gendered metaphors contribute in constructing androcentric beliefs regarding the relationship between wife and husband in the Algerian culture rather than a 'reciprocal' one?

As an attempt to answer the aforementioned research question, we hypothesize that:

- ✓ Certain gendered metaphors are intimately linked to gender ideologies which belittle women and portray them as deficient, while men are rarely depicted negatively.
- ✓ The occurrence of gendered metaphors in the Algerian culture may reveal that people still have rigid stereotypes and androcentric beliefs concerning the 'wife/husband' relationship.

### ***1.1. Significance of the Study***

It is worth pointing out that most of, if not all, popular Algerian proverbial metaphors and sayings belong to the past time, as they have had a significant part in constructing the socio-cultural legacy of our ancestors and have been passed from one generation to another. Nowadays, Algerian people sometimes usually tend to use one of the two common Algerian Arabic expressions “قالوا ناس زمان” and “ناس بكري قالوا” as reporting sentences in order to introduce a proverb or saying when interacting orally, on social media or via the social networking sites such as Facebook. Due to their efficiency in holding and constructing symbolic moral lessons and expressive attitudes towards a particular issue, this paper sheds light on the way gendered proverbial metaphors helps in understanding the way our ancestors have crystallized the notion of gender division regarding the social roles and expectations of Algerian men and women from a purely ideological viewpoint. Since a bunch of gendered metaphors became a part of everyday interactions in the west of Algeria influencing people's mentalities and their behaviours, undertaking such research is a worth doing task as it will bring more insightful views to the already existing literature.

As far as the structure of the present paper is concerned, section one is devoted for the *review of the related literature* in which the relevant key concepts are defined and the most relevant works are acknowledged. Section two is dedicated for the description of the *research methodology* adopted in the study and the procedures collecting the data. Last but not least, section three deals with *data analysis* and *the discussion* of the main findings with reference to our research questions and hypotheses, followed by a brief conclusion about the obtained results.

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Gender Ideologies and Stereotypes.***

In the western society, it is believed that most gender stereotypes were intuitively constituted on the basis of Robin Lakoff's model (1973, 1975) of the female deficit theory and male dominance which both embrace resolutely the prejudiced conviction that women are a deprived marginal group whilst men are the dominant in all aspects of social life

including the way of using language. Stereotypes are used here to stand for the taken-for-granted ideological beliefs and assumptions regarding the social and linguistic behaviour of individuals in a certain situation. In actual fact, gender stereotyping is a cognitive mechanism of prescribing the social roles and speaking modes of men and women, and the way they are supposed to act in a given socio-cultural context; and since popular stereotypes withdraw power and higher social status from women, stereotypes do not illustrate the factual behaviour of women, but they rather lay down an idealized manner of behaviour for women (Abdelhay, 2008).

Additionally, Talbot (2003) further continues that stereotyping as a representational practice is at the heart of the notion of folk linguistics, a term which is often used by linguists to refer to “non-linguists’ beliefs about language”. We tend to mean by folk linguistics, the general conceptions, beliefs and public proverbs implanted firmly in the minds of individuals, and which blatantly function to perpetuate harmful stereotyping of particular social categories, especially women. However, these non-linguistic beliefs have not been given much significance by consecutive gender and language scholars for the reason that most of those beliefs, if not all, were not based on any empirical evidence or scientific method of investigation.

It is worth noting that stereotypes can bear either positive or negative connotations while they hardly ever communicate truthful attributes about others. Whilst positive stereotypes are not problematic for the most part, negative ones generate prejudice and construct a powerful long-lasting male-biased group mentality (Sadiqi, 2003). In her book entitled “Women, Gender and Language in Morocco”, Sadiqi (ibid) divides gender stereotypes in Moroccan culture into two kinds: explicit and implicit. On the one hand, explicit stereotypes comprise explicit gender identity and they emphasize the ambivalent attitude of society in general, and men in particular, towards women (ibid). For instance, men may display a positive attitude towards mothers and ‘good wives’, but they may exhibit a negative attitude towards a ‘female leader’ for the reason that the latter may put at risk their status quo. For Sadiqi, explicit stereotypes strengthen the intimate relationship between women and their homes and resist any association of women with the public sphere (such as street, workplace, etc) by depicting them as “victims, alien beings, transgressing invaders, in public domains” (ibid, p.124). Actually, this kind of stereotypes can be illustrated in two popular proverbs in Moroccan Arabic variety: /*lawər lmra w la ddir brayha*/ (consult a woman but do not take her opinion into consideration) and /*lmra wqualha sghir*/ (a woman’s mind is small) (ibid, p.124).

On the other hand, implicit stereotypes, according to Sadiqi (2003), refer to the overall internalized attitudes and beliefs about the issue of gender as a social category, and that internalization is basically unconscious, resulting from the socialization process and daily cumulative behaviour at home, school, workplace, etc. In the Moroccan culture, for instance, women are implicitly stereotyped as feeble leaders in public, poor interlocutors in religious affairs and lacking wisdom in serious matters (ibid). Unlike explicit gender stereotypes, implicit ones can be defined, in this respect, as the unconsciously deep-seated prejudicial norms and conventional presuppositions apropos gender roles and expectations. These implicit stereotypes “operate in a way which often escapes conscious control and end up by constituting some kind of symbolic law for the members of a community” (ibid, p.124). Moreover, such kind of stereotypes is notably one of the most constant reasons behind the growing commonsense of patriarchy and social disparity between men and women in nearly all areas and stages of life. Because of its power in manipulating one’s way

of thinking, implicit stereotypes are rather tenacious and harmful to women in particular, as they sustain and maintain the proliferation of positive attitudes towards the linguistic behaviour of men and negative ones towards that of women. Women in the Algerian culture, especially those belonging to conservative families, are socially assumed to talk politely to men, never use taboo words in case a man is around and avoid rising harshly the pitch of their voices in public; otherwise they will be judged as social outlaws and ‘deviants’, i.e. rude and unacceptable if they do so.

As far as the Algerian culture is concerned, countless examples of gender stereotypes which grant legitimacy to men over women are evident in the Algerian sociolinguistic profile. In comparison with the Moroccan culture, we repeatedly hear and even say a number of commonplace expressions in day-to-day verbal communication in the Algerian Arabic variety such as /ydir 3la rai martəh/ (يدير على رأي مرته) (he follows his wife’s opinion) and /khti:k men hadrət nsa/ (خطيك من هدره النساء) (do not take women’s speech into account) and so on. In the first example, one can easily notice that although the close relationship between the wife and her husband which is said to be reciprocal from the perspective of Islam religion, there is no escape for women’s language, however, from being ideologically confronted by rejection, immaturity and lacking approval. Likewise, the second example shows explicitly the prejudicial attitudes towards women’s language, representing the latter as powerless, irrational, uncertain and valueless.

## 2.2. Gendered Metaphors

In view of the aforementioned state of affairs, the traditional conception of gender roles and expectations is also reproduced in the ways masculinity and femininity are metaphorised, given that the depiction of women in gendered metaphors tend to disclose rugged stereotypes. In support of this, Bennegherouzi and Abdelhay (2012) writes “it follows that one chief motivation behind the use of metaphor is for the purpose of belittling a group/a sub-group or upholding entrenched derogatory stereotypes” (p.94). In the Algerian culture, gendered metaphors are in fact popular stereotypical representations built around the traditional beliefs and norms attributed to the binary notions of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’. Standing of the common understanding of ‘metaphor’ as a sort of figurative language in which two things or more are linked to one another in a rather literary and innovative way, the qualities hired from the ‘vehicle’ and assigned to the ‘tenor’ are in fact not real traits of this latter as signified by the metaphorical items, but believed properties (Beardsley, 1978). Hence, the lexical items chosen to describe men and women in metaphors are not always valid, but are deemed to be so instead. Consider the following two Algerian proverbial gendered metaphors used in our vernacular Algerian dialectal Arabic variety:

“كان مهني شرا معزة”

01: (He (husband) was at peace until he bought a goat)

“خاصه مرا تاع دار”

02: (He (man) wants to marry a housekeeper woman)

In actual fact, what set the floor for the comprehension of these two metaphors are absolutely the prejudicial attitudes towards women which dominate the mind-set of the Algerian society. In the first example, a woman (as a tenor) is metaphorised using the domestic animal ‘goat’ (as a vehicle) which is known for its irritating habits. In light of this, a folklore belief is held about the new wife who is often depicted as a ‘troublemaker’ and got married to her husband just to wipe out his life. That’s way the man is always advised to

be wise and careful in choosing his future spouse, as most of men seek to marry a 'housekeeper' woman who is explicitly metaphorized using the vehicle 'دار' (house), the one who is fully socialized to do only indoor activities as illustrated in the second example. In view of the Algerian culture, the major gender roles attributed to women should not surpass the doorsteps of the house where she lives in; whether they are daughters, wives or mothers unless they got permission from their men. Thus, the semantic field (i.e. the ground) from in which the relationship between the tenor and vehicle is made in the first example would be 'noisome'; while it would be 'homemaking' in the second example.

Interestingly, figurative speech tends to reinforce the occurrence and re-occurrence of gender-based ideologies and contribute in shaping power relations between men and women from the perspective of androcentricity. This latter has been used by pre-feminist and feminist and even post-feminist research to merely designate that society is man-made and is governed by his norms to serve his needs. In support of this, Bennegherouzi and Abdelhay (2012) assert that "The language of metaphor carries with it advantages to particular groups to the detriment of others and then becomes foundational in constructing social identities" (p.95). Thus, the metaphorization of men and women in the Algerian culture validate to a certain extent the role of gendered metaphors in crystallizing the society's ideological norms and the socio-cultural meanings regarding masculinity and femininity. Furthermore, if we consider those proverbial gendered metaphors as boosting figurative linguistic devices of one's way of thinking, so "there is no doubt that they constitute a mirror image of our cultural identity, illustrating a great deal of our attitudes, world view and life experiences as a whole" (Ould Si Bouziane and Saadi, 2019, p. 138).

### 3. Methodology

As the current study's main objective is to highlight the foremost prejudices and folk beliefs that are reckoned to be deeply-rooted in a bunch of gendered metaphors as in the ones illustrated earlier, a corpus-based qualitative analysis of 20 proverbial gendered metaphors have been chosen for our investigation. The data was collected on the basis of our long-term participant observation of people's day-to-day spontaneous speech in the speech community of Tiaret, west of Algeria. In fact, the data was collected by taking part in various naturally occurring speech events with people of different age categories, gender, and educational backgrounds in the inner city of Tiaret. Moreover, since all the selected proverbial metaphors are used in our local Algerian dialectal Arabic variety; we have decided to translate each instance in the English language for better comprehension of these gendered metaphors.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This section is devoted the analysis and discussion of the most common west Algerian gendered metaphors used in day-to-day speech. It will bring to light the major ideological beliefs and the social norms associated with gender identity construction in the Algerian culture. Moreover, the selected metaphors will be organized into tables so as to highlight what gender ideology is carried with each group.



#### 4.1. Some Animal Vehicles Used to Depreciate Women:

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
”لمراخت البقرة“	The woman is the sister of the <u>cow</u> .
”دايرة كي العود“	She is like a <u>horse</u> .
”كان مهني شرا معزة“	He was at peace until he bought a <u>goat</u> .
”اديه خنفوسة تهنيك و لا تديها غزاله تعيبك“	Better take a <u>beetle</u> amuses you instead of a <u>gazelle</u> tires you.

Table 1: Women and Dehumanizing Metaphors

As illustrated in table 01 above, the first gendered metaphor shows that the tenor (woman) and the animal vehicle (cow) are figuratively linked together as being ‘sisters’. Since this domestic animal denotes in the Algerian culture stupidity and ignorance, this prejudicial metaphor is used in case a woman have done something wrongly and not as it is supposed to be, mainly when she acts without being careful and having much thinking about the outcomes of her actions. In a similar vein, the second metaphor uses the animal vehicle ‘horse’ which is used in many situations to charge a woman if being rude, vicious and vulgar. The same animal word is also used to address her in case she looks physically strong and massive. In addition to this, the Algerian dialectal Arabic term/*trad3læt*/ (ترجلت) which denotes in English “manish” (i.e. she became a man or behaves like he does) is very often said to a woman who has defied the norms of femininity and displayed those of masculinity, which would constitute a negative attitude towards her bring shame and dishonour to her and her family as well.

Whilst the third example in table 01 is chiefly used to connote the wife as a ‘troublemaker’ and the source of problems after marriage as illustrated earlier, the fourth example indicates that the man should not be deceived by the beauty of the woman he wants to marry. A widely held ideological belief in the Algerian culture claims that marrying a very beautiful woman (metaphorised as gazelle) is tricky and probably will dissatisfy him, while marrying an ugly one (metaphorized as beetle) is suitable, since this latter is obliged to do anything to please her husband and make him happy no matter how he looks in order to compensate her ‘lack of beauty’.

#### 4.2. The Metaphorical Term /*adda:r*/ (house):

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
”تزوج بمراتع دار“	He got married to a woman of household.
”الدار كيراهم“	How is the house (wife)?

Table 2: Women and the Private Space

It is worth pointing out that some Algerian men, mainly husbands and fathers, prefer to call their family members including their wives using Algerian dialectal Arabic word “الدار” as a collective noun. In fact, there are two chief interpretations that are implicitly associated with this stereotypical notion. On the one hand, it can symbolize the type of the future wife that a man prefers to marry as demonstrated in the first example above. From an androcentric perspective, this sort of a woman is expected to be a whole-time housewife who should be capable of managing all of her domestic work, since the private space is regarded as a secure sphere that would guarantee her chastity and the honour of her husband and/or parents as well. This has also has something to do with the conception of gender role ideologies which, according to Korabik et al, (2008), refers to “a set of attitudes and beliefs about the proper roles of women and men in the family or society, which could be considered in a continuum ranging from egalitarian to traditional values” (As cited in Ungaretti and

Etchezahar, 2013, p.41).

On the other hand, the same item is used by people in a metaphorical sense in some instances like example 02 when referring to all family members, mainly females, and not the house itself, as this latter would sound pretty ironic. Once more, instead of addressing their daughters, mothers and wives in their real names, the collective term */adda:r/* is used as a vehicle by people to avoid any misunderstanding, since this essentially denotes one's privacy and 'hurma'<sup>1</sup> (حرمة).

#### 4.3. Some Animal Vehicles that Denotes 'Machismo'

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
“داير كي البغل”	He looks like a mule.
“خشين كي الفرد”	Rough like a bull.
“ها هو جا السبع تاعي”	Here comes my lion.

Table 3: Men and Dehumanizing Metaphors

As far as the context of the current study is concerned, people generally used some animal names in certain metaphorical expression as in the ones displayed in table 03 above in order to praise males, mainly those who are physically strong, enormous, brave and having machismo character. However, this is not always the same, since they can be used to address males in case they have displayed rude and stupid behaviour, except the word */sba3/* (lion) which is used in positively in most cases. In this respect, we usually hear and say Algerian Arabic expressions like ‘راه صاكه بغل/حمار’ (he got kicked by a mule/donkey) to describe a man and/or woman if he/she has misbehaved in a particular situation.

##### 4.3.1. Non-animal Vehicles that Denotes “Cowardness”

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
“مسنن في دار كي النساء”	He always stays at home like women.
“هاداك مراوي/مريية”	That man is a womanish.

Table 4: The Metaphorization of Men showing Feminine Inclinations

Regardless of their physical appearance, there are certain Algerian Arabic words that are metaphorically used to depreciate men and mock them for deviating from the norms of masculinity. As far as the first example in table 04 above is concerned, the adjective */msənən/* (مسنن) signifies in our socio-cultural context that male adults and even teenagers should not spend much time staying at their homes like women, as this would form a bad social image about them and will be ideologically stereotyped as social outlaws. Men are, therefore, necessitated to stick to the norms of manhood in the Algerian culture by integrating themselves in the public sphere to get better social experience in doing outdoors activities as active and independent breadwinners of their families.

Within the same context, both of the Algeria Arabic adjectives */mrayya/* and */mrawi/* are synonymously used to refer to the expression */hædæk mafī ra:dʒəl/* (he is not a man, i.e. womanish) and are also close to the meaning of the Algerian Arabic term */dʒajəh/* (جايح) (coward). Both adjectives are derived from the Algerian Arabic noun “مرا” (an adult woman) and are mostly used in a pejorative way to criticize men for having feminine inclinations and frail personas like breaking promises and showing fear. What we can deduce from the aforementioned states of affairs is that being a woman in our Algerian Arabic culture is a

<sup>1</sup> In the Algerian culture, this word denotes that one's privacy and indoor affairs should be fully respected.

lessening parameter that represents powerlessness and inferiority when compared to the superior gender /ra:dʒəl/ (راجل), who, in turn, should adhere to the essentialized socio-cultural norms set by the normative belief system.

#### 4.4. The Woman and Beauty

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
”تخاف المرا من الشيب خوف النعجة من الديب“	The woman fears aging (gray hair) as the sheep fears the wolf.
”الزين زينة و العقل نشرو هلك“	She is endowed with beauty, but the mind shall be bought.
”زين الطفلة عقل و فعائل“	The beauty of the girl is her mentality and deeds.

Table 5: The Metaphorisation of Women's Beauty

It is clear from the first glance at example 01 in table 05 that women in the Algerian Arabic culture are obsessed about their beauty and the mode of fashion more than men do. The expression ‘as the sheep fears the wolf’ is used in a metaphorical sense to show the extent to which women's nightmare, which is aging (الشيب), terrifies them. Ideologically speaking, aging for some married women is an unpleasant sign of deficiency and being exposed to rejection by their husbands in due course, except those loyal ones. In light of this, a common gender ideology is widespread in our culture which is summarized in the Algerian A

rabic sentence /arra:dʒel ma jan3abʃ/ (الراجل ما ينعابش) which stands for ‘the man is unblemished’ in English. In our context, this proverb advocates that no matter the social positioning of a man is and whether he looks ugly or handsome, he remains a superior social being as his reputation is already guaranteed by the society's traditional beliefs.

Even though women are stereotyped in the Algerian culture as being obsessed with beauty and seek for gaining attractive bodies more than men do, the other two metaphoric proverbs stress, however, that what really matters in the woman/girl is not her beauty, but her sense of wisdom, mentality and good character as highlighted by the third example in table 05. That is to say, the real beauty of the woman is crystallized in being intellectually socialized to be future good wives, since the physical beauty of the woman is in many cases deceitful as many Algerian people believe. For instance, the metaphoric expression “العقل نشرو هلك” is a purely folk linguistic belief as it claims that those good-looking girls and /or women lack intellectual abilities and wisdom, that it, they have ‘empty heads’ as best illustrate by the proverbial gendered metaphors in table 06 below.

#### 4.5. The Woman and Lack of Wisdom

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
”القدرة بلا بصل كي المرا بلا عقل“	A mindless woman is like a pot without onion.
”لمرا نص عقل“	The woman is narrow minded.
”شااور المرا و خالف رايبها“	Consult your woman (wife) but disregard her opinion.
”سوق النساء ما يتبنا“	Women's market will never be built.

Table 6: The Metaphorisation of Women as ‘Lacking Reasoning’

As discussed earlier, women in the Algerian culture are most often stereotyped negatively when it comes to intellectualism. In this respect, the first example highlights that a woman who is intellectually deficient is valueless and untrustworthy; the same way as it would be impossible to for someone to cook a ‘tasty’ dish without using ‘onion’, as this latter is considered as an important vegetarian ingredient in cooking most Algerian dishes, mainly the traditional ones. In a similar vein, the second example shows explicitly that the woman’s



views and ways of thinking are deficient and short-sighted and is, therefore, metaphorized as a ‘half-brained’ creature. This belief is also deeply rooted in example 03, which claims that the husband should not take his wife’s opinion into consideration; simply because she thinks and suggests things with her emotions (heart) instead of her mind as many Algerian folks believe.

Actually, example 04 tells the whole story as it can represent two main negative stereotypes about women, and their use depends on one’s intention. On the one hand, the metaphoric expression ‘women’s market’ may indicate that if a group of women have gathered to tackle a given issue or to solve a problem in particular social context, there will be no agreement among them but a lot of dispute, gossiping and talkativeness. On the other hand, it may also refer to the ideology that women’s world is dark in the sense that it is full of tricks, danger and pitfalls. In other words, women in our society are most often charged with evil deeds and the source of social problems as shown in table 07 below.

#### 4.6. The Stereotyping of Women as ‘the Source of Evil’

Algerian Metaphor	English Translation
“الخير مرا و الشر مرا”	Good is a Woman and Evil is a Woman.
“يتحزمو بل لفاعي و يتخللو بالعقارب”	They (women) wear <u>snakes</u> as belts and <u>scorpions</u> as anklets.
“ما يخسر بين لحباب غير النساء و الدراهم”	Nothing would ruin relationships between intimates except money and women.

Table 7: The Metaphorization of Women as ‘Evildoers’

From a folklore standpoint, the first example in table 07 tells that the woman plays a major role either in strengthening or destroying families and relationships in the Algerian culture. For instance, the metaphoric expression ‘الخير مرا’ suggests that if a married woman lived happily with her husband and succeeded in raising her children well, she is a good woman, but if things run in the opposite, this indicates that the wife is a bad one ‘الشر مرا’. Within the same line of thought, the other two examples in table 07 stress implicitly that women are the ‘source of evil’ in our society. If we consider the second example, women are metaphorized using two of the most dangerous species (snakes and scorpions) as animal vehicles so that to accuse them for breaking relationships between relatives and couples and causing troubles between sincere and intimate friends and family members; the same way as money does.

## 5. Conclusion

As the study’s main concern was to disclose the major gender ideologies, stereotypes, and prejudicial norms that make up the socio-cultural heritage of a western Algerian speech community, figurative language has in fact proved efficient in the maintenance of a gender-biased mentality in an Algerian context, as this was best illustrated in gendered metaphors on women for the most part. In spite of the decisive socio-economic changes in women’s social status in Algeria, the negative stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes are still practiced towards them and are deep-seated in day-to-day colloquial speech unfortunately. Through its word choice and imaginary style, gendered metaphor language plays a vital role in depicting the way normative belief system in a modern Arabo-Islamic context works in strengthening men’s status at the expense of that of women. Hence, the Algerian woman is metaphorically portrayed as a homemaker, short-sighted, deceitful, and wiseless social being; while the man is simply depicted as the ‘head of the table’.

All in all, a good deal of ‘colloquial’ gendered metaphors in the culture of the Algerian western speech community of Tiaret are explicitly linked to androcentric socio-cultural norms and folk beliefs; the basis on which the notions of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ are conceptualized as a ‘Norm/Other’ relationship. As far as the study’s limitations are concerned, probing people attitudes towards these and other gendered metaphors in real life situations is a compulsory task for either the validity or the rejection of the conclusions made beforehand. Moreover, the adoption a context-sensitive approach is recommended for future research by taking into account the various contextual cues surrounding its occurrence in a given socio-cultural context.

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